

A PLEDGE OF NONVIOLENCE
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KOBAYASHI, SGI-USA JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL DIV. LEADERS

Due to the recent tragic events that have taken place in our country and around the world such as in Littleton, Colo., and Kosovo we wanted to come up with a way to reach out to society and take action regarding violence. We started to discuss with members around the country about how we could take this positive stand against violence and make a difference in society.

It came about that many of the members wanted to take some form of concrete action against the increasing tide of violence in our country. The idea of the pledge came up and we felt that it was the most positive way for everyone to get involved.

Our idea was that people would be able to personally decide to make a difference by signing this pledge and then take the responsibility to encourage others to also make a difference. We had a great discussion about the ideas we wanted to convey and the feeling behind it. Using the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Abolition 2000 Petition as an example we came up with the three point pledge. The first point was to respect our own life and not be violent toward ourselves. The second point was to respect the lives of others. And the last point was to encourage and inspire hope in others through our own example.

The goals of this campaign are to heighten the awareness of the different forms of violence through meaningful dialogue and to inspire a lifelong commitment from each individual to pledge against all forms of violence.

We hope to see the junior high and high school members put all of their efforts into making this campaign really successful. We want the members to be as creative as they can and if they want, to use suggestions from the "Quest For Peace" information kit, which is very inspirational.

Through the information kit we learned that violence doesn't always occur in a physical form. It is perpetrated by many of us every day through the words that we speak and our actions. We will begin this Victory Over Violence campaign in every district throughout the SGI-USA during the month of August. We should also feel free to create other exciting arenas where we can share the Victory Over Violence drive both in- and outside of our organization. These pledges will be distributed to all districts throughout July. Through each person's efforts, we can truly make a difference in the way society views violence and make a positive stand toward a more loving and peaceful society.

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My Pledge of Victory Over Violence

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Author: Jimmy King, Bobbie Stemple, Steve Mortan, Nobuko Kobayashi
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I _____
(print name)

- will value my own life. Recognizing that a lack of self-identity and hope for the future lay at the roots of all violence, I will reach beyond my limitations, taking concrete steps each day to uncover my real potential. I will never give up on my dreams, even if they seem impossible.
- will respect all life. Recognizing that violence comes in many forms, I will not isolate myself but will create an environment where others feel comfortable and can be themselves. I will see beyond superficial differences and reflect on my own behavior.
- will inspire hope in others. With courage, I will resolutely stand up against violence, be it verbal, physical or passive and teach others through my own example. I will support others and encourage them to follow their dreams.

(signature)

(date)